Creating inclusive schools: a self-review tool for educational practitioners

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For this study, the schooling experiences of secondary-aged pupils with and without SEND attending three mainstream schools in England were explored. Thematic analysis revealed the challenges these young adolescents with SEND encountered to feel included in their schools and light is shed on their perspectives of what an inclusive school should be. Of significance contributing to pupils' positive or negative feelings about school and their feelings of being included or excluded were: their perceptions of the implementation of approaches to behaviour management; their perceptions of the equitable allocation of teacher support and/or teacher attention; relations with their teachers; whether they found their lessons engaging or 'boring'; and the extent to which they perceived their voices were heard and subsequently, acted upon. The findings of the study are discussed with reference to Farrell's (2004) model of inclusion and an elaboration of the model is proposed as a self-review tool to be used by educational practitioners as an aid to facilitate their inclusion in mainstream provision.

Introduction

The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), and the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) are two of the most significant education policies aimed at safeguarding the right of all pupils to education and the right to express their views freely in matters affecting them. In the last decade, an increasing number of studies have focused on eliciting the voices of pupils with special educational needs as a way to investigate their perceptions of what an inclusive school should be like (Byrnes & Rickards, 2011; Cunningham, 2020; Messiou & Ainscow, 2015; Messiou, 2019; Ryan, 2009). This paper provides evidence that young adolescents with SEND have perceptive ideas of their individual needs and the practical steps teachers should make to help them feel included. The findings of this study are

1

discussed using Farrell's (2004) model of inclusion, underlining the key role teachers play in shaping pupils' school experiences and engendering inclusive settings.

Ainscow (2007) argued that teachers play an instrumental role in the delivery and implementation of inclusion, which is strongly related with the attitudes they hold. In the literature, numerous factors are known to affect their attitudes towards inclusion, including *demographic characteristics*, such as age and gender, *attitudinal variables*, such as self-efficacy, years of experience, training received and pupils' type of SEND as well as the *appropriateness of school facilities* in terms of there being adequate resources, suitable class size and/or the provision of a therapist in the classroom (de Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Leonard & Smyth, 2020; Park, Dimitrov & Park, 2018; Saloviita & Consegnati, 2019). It is thus to be expected that some previous research (de Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Boyle, Topping, & Jindal-Snape, 2013) has suggested that teachers may hold negative attitudes towards inclusion owing to their perceived inability to accommodate pupils' diversity of needs and lack of knowledge on how inclusive education is implemented in practice. In this paper, an overview of inclusive education and its characteristics is presented, with a new self-audit tool for teachers being introduced. This is aimed at, firstly, gauging the schooling experience of pupils with SEND and subsequently acting as an aid to facilitating their inclusion in mainstream provision.

Defining inclusive education

The implementation of inclusive education is not without its challenges. Lack of a commonly agreed definition is unarguably identified as one of the fundamental issues (Florian, 2014). Despite the differences in the way inclusive education has been perceived, in the UK, scholars tend to link this notion to the idea of school improvement, giving particular emphasis to defining what an inclusive school should be (e.g. Booth & Ainscow, 2002, 2011; Waitoller &

Artles, 2013). The definition that is broadly accepted about inclusive schools is that suggested by Booth and Ainscow (2002), where inclusive education is perceived as a process of "increasing participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities" of mainstream schools (p. 3). Similarly, Waitoller and Artiles (2013) defined inclusive education as "a systematic process of overcoming barriers to participation and learning of all students" (p. 327). Whilst, according to Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011), it is one that provides "rich learning opportunities that are sufficiently made available for *everyone*, so that all learners are able to participate in the classroom life" (p. 826). Despite the differences in these definitions, they are all underpinned by a common theme - an inclusive environment is one where everyone benefits.

The key characteristics of an inclusive school

While there is no single educational approach to defining an inclusive school (Lipsky & Gartner, 1999), according to the international effectiveness movement, there are certain characteristics and values that make some schools more effective in this regard than others (Potter, Reynolds & Chapman, 2002). In the special educational field, school effectiveness has been raised in the work of several scholars (e.g. Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002; Booth & Ainscow, 2011; McLeskey, Waldron, & Redd, 2014), who sought to identify the characteristics that enhance the implementation of inclusion and maximise its efficiency. Indeed, empirical studies at the international level have shown that schools found to be inclusive tended to follow similar principles: equal educational opportunities being prioritised for all learners through the differentiation of teaching strategies (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Tiernan, Casserly, & Maguire, 2018); the provision of co-operating learning activities (Lehane & Senior, 2019); and encouragement to participate actively in the learning process (Rangvid, 2018; UNESCO, 2017). Moreover, behaviour management policies are clearly, fairly and consistently

implemented (Cefai & Cooper, 2010); pupils are listened to (Michael & Frederickson, 2013) and their active participation in decision making through a school mechanism referred to as Student Voice (Quinn & Owen, 2016) have been identified as critical components for developing inclusive settings. These findings were generally found to be consistent regardless of the methodology used for the data collection and the educational context in which the study was carried out. Despite inclusive characteristics being relatively well understood by headteachers and educational practitioners, lack of guidance and ambiguity around how inclusive principles are implemented in practice (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011) in tandem with a lack of confident and well-trained teachers (Parey, 2019), have posed serious concerns about the implementation of inclusive education.

Self-auditing models of inclusion

Since the enactment of the Salamanca Statement, many papers have been written about inclusive education and inclusive practices, but only a few have offered practical advice on actually how to create an inclusive setting (e.g. Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Farrell, 2004). In 2002, Booth and Ainscow (2002; 2011) introduced in the UK their seminal work, the Index for Inclusion, which was the first substantial self-audit tool for creating inclusive learning environments. The Index is based on guiding questions, with a particular emphasis given to increasing the participation and reducing the exclusion of all pupils from learning and curricula. However, no reference to practical guidance regarding how to decrease pupils' absenteeism from schools due to fixed-term or permanent exclusions was provided. Two years later, the introduction of Farrell's model of inclusion (2004) recognised this limitation and identified the presence of pupils with SEND at school as one of the prerequisites required for inclusive settings (see Figure 1).

4

Specifically, Farrell proposed that inclusion comprises: *Presence, Acceptance, Participation and Achievement*, with all these components being equally essential for creating an inclusive setting. According to Farrell "it is not…sufficient for children simply to be present in a school. [Children] need to be accepted by their peers and by staff, they need to participate in all the school's activities, and they need to attain good levels of achievement in their work and behaviour" (Farrell, 2004, p. 8 – 9, original emphasis). In this study, Farrell's model of inclusion is utilised to analyse the findings of SEND pupils' school experiences and thus, provide new insights and practical advice on how to create more inclusive settings.

Research design

The findings presented in this paper are part of a broader research study aimed at understanding inclusion by examining the interrelationship between the inclusivity of a school setting on pupils' sense of school belonging and social relations. A mixed-methods approach was employed for the data collection (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) using semi-structured interviews and self-reported questionnaires. In particular, an interview schedule was designed comprising open-ended questions, with supplementary questions to explore responses further. These quizzed the pupils' attitude towards school (e.g. How do you feel about being in this school?); their perceived school ethos: behaviour management (e.g. What is your view on the way teachers apply behaviour management strategies at school?); inclusion (e.g. What is your view about Student Voice?). The pupil self-reported version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997) was also employed. This is a brief measure of screening for behavioural and emotional problems with pupils and adolescents.

Schools and participants

Participants included pupils from three mainstream state-funded secondary schools situated in a metropolitan area in England, with the schools being purposefully selected according to the

5

level of inclusivity of their school ethos. According to the School Census used by the English government to track social inclusion policy, the inclusivity of a school setting is defined by monitoring numerical characteristics such as "information on class sizes, pupils with statements, pupils with SEN but without statements, free school meals, ethnicity, absences, and permanent exclusions" (DfE, 2013). School Level Census Metadata (DfE 2013) along with statistics of the local authorities provided by the Department for Education (DfE 2013), were used to identify suitable schools. Initially, all mainstream secondary schools (n = 430) of all the local authorities with high numbers of SEMH and MLD were identified (n = 96). The rationale behind focusing on these two groups is that they make up the two largest groups of SEND in mainstream settings. Schools that had failed to secure a relatively large number of pupils in both of these SEND groups were excluded from the analysis, as they would have restricted the size of the recruitment sample. After a rigorous selection process based on School Census statistics three schools, one 'very inclusive', one 'just inclusive' and one 'less inclusive', were identified and recruited for participation in the study. The identification of schools that differ in relation to inclusivity stemmed from two initial criteria, followed by matching three further criteria. *First criterion*: the 'inclusivity' of each school was measured by the difference in the percentage of SEND pupils in each school with the average for the Local Authority (LA) to which it belonged. *Second criterion*: another indication of 'inclusivity' was the percentage of exclusions. Schools that had a lower percentage when compared with the LA's average were characterised as inclusive, while those with a higher percentage were deemed as being less so. Schools that had been filtered according to the first and second criteria also required having similar Ofsted reports, socioeconomic background (i.e. percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals) and ethnicity distribution (i.e. percentage of pupils who speak English as a first language) to meet *the third, the fourth and fifth criteria*, respectively.

With regards to pupils, a purposive sample of 37 young adolescents with SEND and a comparable group of eight typically developing pupils across the three settings agreed to be interviewed. The focus was on pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and moderate learning difficulties (MLD). The rationale for focusing on these two groups of SEND was as follows. Within the group of the children and young people with SEND, exclusion rates (permanent and fixed) are the highest for pupils identified with SEMH (DfE, 2018), whilst according to government statistics, 21.6% of children and young people with SEND have MLD as a primary type of need (DfE, 2018). Typically developing pupils were also included as a comparison group.

Regarding the selection of the participating pupils, professional advice was sought from the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) of each school who identify typical pupils and those with SEND, (i.e. pupils with MLD and SEMH), according to the school's SEND register. In particular, all SEND categories and a variety of combinations e.g. SEMH and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) were identified. For the purpose of this study, pupils identified by the school as having SEMH and another SEND category were classified as pupils with SEMH. Similarly, pupils classified as having MLD or MLD and another SEND category were classified as MLD. Pupils identified as having another category of SEND, as well as those pupils that had a combination of MLD and SEMH, were classified as having Other SEND. For triangulation purposes on the identification of SEMH, all pupils were asked to complete the pupil self-reported version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997). According to its terminology, behaviour problems are labelled as externalising difficulties and emotional problems as internalising ones. Depending on their SDQ total scores pupils are classified according to the SDQ terminology as 'normal', 'borderline' or 'abnormal'.

7

Data collection and analysis

Completed parental and individual consent forms were sought from all participants prior to data collection due to the age of the pupils. The consent forms clearly explained the purpose of the research, participants' right to withdraw from the study, along with how the anonymity and privacy of their personal data would be ensured. All data were stored on password-protected devices and destroyed at the end of the project in accordance with the Data Protection Act (HM Gov, 1998) and BERA Ethical Guidelines (2018). The study had ethical clearance from a higher institution.

Quantitative and qualitative data of this study were analysed via the employment of SPSS statistical package software and the qualitative data analysis program QSR NVivo, respectively. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Thematic analysis was performed through the process of coding in six phases, as described by Braun and Clarke (2013), followed by an inductive and seductive circle of coding, as explained by Saldaña (2013). The emergent themes from the raw data were grouped and organised based on a pre-existing framework that the researchers conceived from theory, whilst new themes were also created when needed. The analysis was informed by the conceptual framework developed in the original study (Dimitrellou, 2017).

Findings

The findings are presented under the headings of presence, acceptance, participation and achievement, as outlined in Farrell's (2004) model of inclusion. This allows for a comprehensive understanding of what makes an inclusive school, as revealed in the responses of young adolescents with SEMH, MLD and their typically developing counterparts.

Presence

Interview data of this study revealed that the presence of pupils at school should not be taken for granted. On the contrary, insights of pupils revealed two organisational structures, which in their view negatively affect their attendance at school, namely early school times and long school periods, as illustrated in the examples below:

> *The worst about it is just having to wake up that much earlier just to get into school. [Pupils with SEMH]*

> *So, I don't mind school, but you know, sometimes to wake up in the morning to do homework, it can be a bit tiring, so I get stressed. [Pupil with MLD]*

> *Normally we would have a double, a double, and two singles, or two singles, double, double, it's so much quicker, the day goes faster. But when it's a single, single, single, it's just so long. It's tiring. [Typically Developing Pupil]*

> *If I have double lessons, I don't really enjoy it, then I don't really feel like coming to school because it is boring. [Pupils with SEMH]*

Prevention of exclusion was another prerequisite mentioned by pupils to safeguard their presence at school. By prevention of exclusion they meant, the implementation of effective behaviour management and the creation of an inclusive ethos, where they felt a sense of belonging.

Acceptance

Identification: association between school registers and pupils' self-reports on the SDQ

A chi-square test for independence was conducted to determine whether there was a significant relationship in the SEMH identification between school registers and pupils' self-reports on the

9

SDQ. The results indicated that of all the *pupils registered as having SEMH* in school reports, 44.1% scored as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, 5.9% as borderline, while 50% scored as normal, χ^2 (6, N = 1316) = 26.721, *p* < .001 (see Table 1). This means that half of the pupils identified by the school as having SEMH classified themselves as not having behavioural problems. Conversely, among those *pupils registered as typically developing* in school reports, 16.6% classified themselves as abnormal, 5.4% as borderline, while 78.1% saw themselves as normal. Thus, it can be said that a large number of pupils who had been registered as typical in school reports, self-scored elevated levels of externalising difficulties (i.e. behavioural difficulties). This finding can be interpreted in two ways: either that typically developing pupils were mistakenly registered in school reports as having SEMH or that these pupils had overrated their experienced difficulties.

Differentiation

There is enough evidence in the interview data to suggest that not all pupils, with or without SEND, perceived an inclusive ethos in the same way, thus highlighting the need for teachers to differentiate their teaching approaches. This is particularly evident in the interview responses provided by pupils with MLD and SEMH. These point to different educational approaches and qualities a teacher should have to meet their particular needs. According to the perspectives of pupils with MLD, two of the main qualities they valued in teachers were their ability to deliver accessible and engaging lessons and the allocation of enough support in class. Illustrations of these perspectives are given below:

> *They're [those teachers who are] funny and they make learning easier.*
> *They don't make it strict, they make it easy for you to learn by having little*
> *bits of fun in it. [Pupil with MLD]*

> *If I'm stuck on work or anything like that, [teachers] 'll help me. [Pupil with MLD]*

By contrast, pupils with SEMH reported valuing those teachers who were aware of how to meet their learning needs and also, had the skills and knowledge to manage their misbehaviour tactfully. The following interview extracts elaborate upon these perspectives:

> *They explain it. They break it down, so then I understand what they're saying. [Pupil with SEMH]*

> *He is a good teacher. He teaches you just right. You have fun and games sometimes, but sometimes he tells you when to stop. You know when to stop. [Pupil with SEMH]*

In terms of teaching accommodations, pupils with SEMH reported that their needs would be met, if second chances were provided during the lessons and enough time to complete or process information was given.

> *It would be better if they give me a second chance to think about it and come back to me. [Pupil with SEMH]*

> *They'll tell us to do one thing, then a minute after they'll tell us to do another thing, and then when they check out our book and ask, "Have you finished the first thing?" and if you say, "no because I haven't been able to because you only gave us a little bit of time", and then they'll give you a detention. [Pupil with SEMH]*

Concerning the applied behaviour management approaches, responses of pupils with SEMH revealed that their needs would be met, if the applied behaviour strategies were clearer in terms what acceptable behaviour is; allocation of these strategies being consistently and fairly applied

11

to all pupils; and a special counsellor being available in the school. According to the experiences of those pupils, one of the most common grievances reported as preventing their needs to be met was their referring to the ineffective behaviour management strategies used to manage their behaviour. As one pupil with SEMH explained:

> *I think that the teachers do need to be a bit more strict, because pupils can*
>
> *get quite rude to them and they kind of just let it go, so it doesn't really*
>
> *teach them anything about what they are doing is wrong. But it's normally*
>
> *just they get sent out and they come back in. It's not really learning nothing*
>
> *and I think pupils try to be rude just to get out of class so they don't have to*
>
> *do the work, but I think many teachers could be a bit more strict and*
>
> *actually punish them, instead of just sending them out. [Pupil with SEMH]*

Complaints were also expressed about the unfair way school rules were implemented among pupils, with some commenting on teachers' unacceptable practice of attaching labels and being biased against those showing challenging behaviour. The following brings to the fore this viewpoint:

> *It's, like, teachers remember when you've been rude to them, so they're*
>
> *always going to carry the stigma of "That's that rude child…then, if*
>
> *someone throws something… they're going to go for you, and that's just*
>
> *how it is. [Pupil with SEMH]*

Insights of pupils with SEMH revealed the importance of special counsellor provision at school for teaching them strategies as to how to control themselves and regulate their feelings. As one pupil put it:

> *I don't have particularly the best behaviour. I guess that teachers know that*
>
> *I do take time to calm down and actually accept what I've done […] I get to*

12

talk about it [to counsellors] and then whatever punishment happens, I just

have to take one and have to do it. [Pupil with SEMH]

Insights of typically developing pupils suggested that their needs would be met, if when in class, a quiet learning environment was secured by having capable teachers to control misbehaviour and minimise disruptions.

They actually manage it really good, because they do these levels […]. So,

then you know you are actually doing something wrong and so you change

your behaviour. When they're bad, they send them outside. That's what they

do, and you carry on learning. [Typically Developing Pupil]

Participation

Insights of pupils revealed that opportunities for participation were offered both in-class through the delivery of interactive lessons and at school, through the implementation of Student Voice. However, according to the experiences of most pupils, such opportunities were limited as not all teachers taught in an interactive way and the Student Voice mechanism lacked effective planning and implementation.

Interactive lessons

All pupils, independently of their SEND status or type of needs, appeared to enjoy and derive great satisfaction when interactive teaching strategies were adopted by the teachers. An example of such a lesson is described below:

He is an English teacher and he is always making lessons fun and using

examples […] he literally captured in what we're doing, like right now

we're doing Macbeth […] he's making facts about Shakespeare and making

us feel more knowledgeable about the whole thing. [Typical Pupil]

However, according to the experiences of pupils, not all lessons were interactive and interesting; there were many lessons that were boring. "Boring lessons" were defined by pupils as lessons where activities were dull and/or the information provided was not useful for their future. Illustrations of these perspectives are given below:

> *A bad lesson is when we're doing boring work all the time and we don't have time to communicate or do fun activities. [Typically Developing Pupil]*

> *Sometimes [the lesson] it's boring, and it's not useful for when I'm older. The lessons are fun when they teach us stuff that we'll need when we are older…like what mortgages are… [pupil with MLD]*

Student Voice

Student Voice was another means that schools adopted to encourage pupils' active participation and involvement in the school's decision making. However, despite their efforts, all pupils with and without SEND described their involvement in Student Voice as unpleasant. According to their experiences, only a few of their voices were listened to by teachers and most reported that they were unwilling to put themselves forward as representatives. Three main reasons emerged for their reluctance to do so: i) lack of interest, ii) lack of commitment, whereby very few meetings were held and iii) perceived lack of effectiveness, as no change resulted from their suggestions. The lattermost is reflected in the following quote:

> *It's in place, but I've never seen anything that they've changed. [Typically Developing Pupil]*

An additional reason reported was lack of personal confidence; a response most likely to be articulated by pupils with SEND. Examples of this are illustrated below:

14

I'm good, but I could be unsettled by them. They always chose smart people

or the people like the Ms. Perfects or whatever to the Student Council.

[Pupil with SEMH]

I feel like the disability holds them back... I mean, they just don't have the

confidence, and it shouldn't be like that. [Typically Developing Pupil]

Achievement

All pupils irrespective of their SEND status and type of need acknowledged the value of education and the importance of finishing school in order to secure a better future. The following interview extracts illustrate this:

I feel school is good for life. Everyone has to go to school, has to work

hard, and participate, […] get high grades so you can get a good job in the

future. [Typically Developing Pupil]

Because you need an education to go somewhere in life. [Pupil with

SEMH]

Discussion

For the current study, the voices of typically developing pupils and those with SEMH and MLD were drawn upon, with the aim of improving inclusive practice. To present the findings and implications of this study Farrell's model (2004) of inclusion is employed. This model was chosen due to its practical relevance for schools, whereby it has been contended that it could be used to audit their provision in relation to inclusion and to inform forward planning. As Farrell (2004) argued 'it is not […] sufficient for children to simply be present in a school. They need to be accepted by their peers and by staff, they need to participate in all the school's

15

activities, and they need to attain good levels of achievement in their work and behaviour' (p. 8-9).

The elaboration of the model of inclusion involves adopting four conditions (i.e. presence, acceptance, participation and achievement) proposed by Farrell and builds on these conditions by placing emphasis on the steps that teachers could follow in order to achieve inclusion, along with the outcomes that can be achieved by doing so. The new model is discussed below with a brief reference to some of the key findings of this study.

First step: safeguarding presence by creating a school that pupils want to be in

According to Farrell's model, presence is the first condition of inclusion. That is, it is deemed essential for mainstream settings to accept, provide education to and retain pupils with and without SEND within the educational environment. Whilst all three participating schools in the current study accepted a substantial percentage of pupils with SEND, some were found to be less inclusive than others. This suggests that the presence of pupils with SEND within a mainstream setting does not necessarily mean that the school is inclusive. It is also crucial for the school to find ways to safeguard pupils' presence. The thematic analysis of this study revealed that the presence of pupils at school is negatively affected by two organisational structures, namely long school periods (i.e. consecutive double lessons) and early school starts. Prior research evidence has suggested that the implementation of later starts at schools is linked with advances in pupils' educational attainment (Kelley, Lockley, Foster & Kelley, 2015), attendance and graduation rates (McKeever & Clark, 2017). Another prerequisite for ensuring pupils' presence at school has been reported as being the prevention of exclusion by such means as the implementation of effective behaviour management and the creation of an inclusive ethos where all pupils feel that they belong (Cosma & Soni, 2019). However, generating an inclusive ethos where everyone is equally accepted is not always possible as research evidence shows

that teachers are more accepting of pupils identified as having physical disabilities and less accepting of those identified as having challenging behaviour (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). This result suggests that a pupil's inclusion and acceptance at school is largely dependent on their type of SEND. However, displaying challenging behaviour is not the only reason that increases the likelihood of a pupil to receive a permanent exclusion from school. Statistics provided by the Department for Education (DfE, 2018) demonstrate that other categories/groups of pupils are equally vulnerable to exclusion, among the most common reasons identified were i) have a challenging behaviour, ii) be Gypsy/Roma and Traveller of Irish heritage, iii) be a boy than a girl (three times more likely), iv) be eligible for school meals (four times more likely), v) have a disability (seven times more likely) as well as vi) be Black Caribbean (three times more likely). It can thus, be said that some categories/groups of pupils, although they are initially present at school, they are not all equally accepted and therefore, do not go on to participate and achieve. There are, therefore, important educational considerations that teachers and other key stakeholders should contemplate and act upon, if they are to secure the continuing presence of all pupils in their school.

Second step: facilitating acceptance through accurate identification and differentiation

The second condition of inclusion, as proposed by Farrell, is acceptance. For a pupil to be accepted, it is essential for the school to be both well-informed about his/her characteristics and individual needs as well as being aware of *how* to accommodate these. The quantitative findings of this study indicated accurate identification as one of the main processes a school must follow to meet the individual needs of pupils. One other process, as emerged from the qualitative data, is differentiation. This means that for a school to achieve acceptance, it is essential for teachers to be provided with accurate identification that helps them understand the individual characteristics of pupils, which in turn, can provide guidance regarding how to meet

17

pupils' needs through differentiation of their teaching approaches. This is effectively the second step teachers should follow to facilitate pupils' adjustment to the school environment.

While accurate identification is essential for being able to accommodate pupils' needs, differentiation is also vital as pupils with SEND are not a homogeneous group. It is, thus, important for teachers to recognise the characteristics and indicators of different types of needs as well as be well-informed about how to differentiate pupils' educational approaches and behavioural practices, if they are to meet their diversity of needs. This is an additional challenge, as the accurate identification of certain categories of SEND is considerably taxing, particularly that of SEMH (Cooper, 1996; Graham, Phelps, Maddison, & Fitzgerald, 2011), with existing mental health-related training for teachers being insufficient and thus, lacking effectiveness (Anderson, Werner-Seidler, Kind, Gayed, Harvey & O' Dea, 2019; Yamaguchi, Foo, Nishida, Ogawa, Togo & Sasakim, 2018). In terms of effective differentiation of pupils needs, as the qualitative data of this study has indicated, addressing the needs of pupils with SEMH requires teachers to be knowledgeable of how to control a class, apply school rules with consistency, set clear limits and administer punishments with fairness. They also need to be aware of how to accommodate their learning needs by providing second chances and allowing enough time for them to process information. In contrast, meeting the needs of pupils with MLD requires teachers to develop a set of different skills, such as being effective in delivering accessible lessons, creating a suitable learning environment, being vigilant in allocating enough support and devoting close attention to the learner. For typically developing pupils, working in a quiet learning environment was reported to be fundamental for their needs to be met in class. They urged teachers to allow minimal disruptions and tactfully to manage misbehaviour in class. Differentiation is the second step towards inclusion, and undoubtedly one of the most challenging tasks teachers need to acknowledge and embrace (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Tiernan, Casserly, & Maguire, 2018).

Third step: ensuring participation through interactive lessons and engagement in Student Voice

According to Farrell, the third condition for fostering a school with an inclusive ethos is the prerequisite that all pupils are active participants in their school community. As the interview responses of pupils indicated there are two ways teachers can do this: firstly, by delivering interactive lessons, whilst also ensuring that all pupils are participating; and secondly, by making sure that Student Voice and its applied mechanisms enable all pupils, irrespective of their needs or popularity, to express their opinion confidently. Moreover, the thematic analysis revealed that one key requirement for encouraging and increasing the participation of pupils in the school settings is teachers' competence at active listening and acting upon pupil suggestions. The benefits of listening to pupils and encouraging their active participation at school have been demonstrated in several studies (Byrnes & Rickards, 2011; Messiou & Ainscow, 2015; Messiou, 2019; Michael & Frederickson, 2013; Quinn & Owen, 2016; Ryan, 2009).

Fourth step: encourage all pupils to achieve by setting high aspirations

Fulfilment of the first three conditions in Farrell's model can foster the accomplishment of the final condition, namely, achievement. The outcome that can be produced from the effective implementation of the processes and the steps mentioned above is a school with an inclusive ethos that accommodates the individual needs of all pupils and enables them to feel included. As the current study has demonstrated, all the pupils, regardless of their SEND status, type of need and school setting that they attended, perceived school to be very important for their future lives. This highlights teachers' responsibility and duty to create an inclusive school that equally enables all pupils to reach their full potential. Indeed, both case studies conducted in the UK (Farrell, Dyson, Polat, Hutcheson, & Gallannaugh, 2007) and the USA (McLeskey & Waldron,

2011) have shown that when a school is inclusive and effective all students can benefit by achieving good academic outcomes.

As Figure 2 shows, the research outcomes of this study lead to the following needing to be considered: a later start and shorter day, accurate identification and differentiation through the implementation of effective behaviour management and accessible lessons, as well as delivery of interactive lessons and effective Student Voice, as being the key steps for supporting a school's achievement of presence, acceptance, participation and achievement, i.e. the four conditions proposed by Farrell. It is, thus, suggested that these four practical steps can guide educational practitioners to move inclusion forward.

Conclusions

This research is an important step in getting to hear the voices of young adolescents with SEND and acting upon their suggestions through the development of a self-audit tool for the creation of inclusive settings. Four practical steps have been proposed as aids to educational practitioners moving inclusion forward, thereby shedding light on the characteristics of the school young adolescents want to be in as well as on the educational approaches that need to be implemented to accommodate their needs.

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